

Volunteer Telephone Befriender

Our mission is to provide information and support for anyone affected by cancer, offering practical ways of enhancing physical, psychological and emotional wellbeing.

This is a new volunteering opportunity, developed in response to Covid19. The role aims to reduce social isolation and loneliness by making regular, friendly telephone or facetime contact calls over a time limited period engaging with our older clients age 65+. Befrienders will encourage clients to talk about day-to-day safe topics of interest, enable them to unburden their feelings and share their worries, raise awareness of our remote online services and resources and support clients to view and access these, and introduce them to the opportunity to take part in social group chats with other clients online.

Befrienders are crucially important in being a trusted, empathetic ear who will make regular calls to a number of clients affected by cancer over the length of the project (initially six months) ensuring these calls are always a warm and positive experience. This is an ideal role for people with a friendly telephone manner, excellent communication and listening skills, an ability to explain our support services in a clear manner and assist older people with the necessary information to enable them to view and access these online. This role may also suit those who want to reduce any feelings of isolation and loneliness they themselves may have.

We are aiming to recruit at least 10 volunteers and support 100 clients over 6 months.

Time commitment: Telephone or facetime contact during the daytime for up to an hour per client per week.

Main Duties

- Calling existing and newly referred clients age 65+ who have expressed an interest in the befriending project by agreed appointment. It is envisaged that each call will last 30-60 minutes and take place approximately every seven days for a time limited period per client.
- Being a good, active listener, with an understanding of people affected by cancer, providing them with the opportunity to talk and share their feelings whilst maintaining boundaries.
- Becoming familiar with the Centre's website in order to assist clients who do not feel safe to access face to face services to find our online and remote support information.
- Encouraging and assisting clients to gain access to our remote resources, including talking through how to use new technology to view and book online.
- Enquiring as to whether clients would like the opportunity to engage in group chats with other clients and assisting the Centre to organise these.
- Informing the appropriate staff member if you become concerned about the welfare or safeguarding of a client.
- Encouraging clients to provide feedback at the end of each befriending relationship.
- Respecting the privacy of each client, ensuring confidentiality at all times.
- Adhering to all TMC policies.

Volunteer Specification

- Must have access to a phonenumber and quiet space at home, or be able to come to the Centre, to be able to make calls during the daytime.
- Must possess excellent communication skills – especially listening skills.
- Must be able to listen without giving any personal views/opinions nor discuss or 'self-disclose' any personal information about themselves or others.

- Must be able to familiarise themselves with our current services, including those on our website being delivered remotely/online and how to access these.
- Must be able to help organise or contribute to any group chat process.
- Must be flexible and be able to work as part of a team.
- Must be able to carry out tasks as requested and follow any guidance provided.
- Must be open-minded and non-judgmental about the choices made by clients.
- Must be sensitive and able to cope with a wide range of emotions expressed by clients.
- Must be able to commit to calling at least one client per week for 30-60 minutes.
- Must have a standard DBS check or be prepared to undergo one.
- Must not have been bereaved or had personal experience of cancer either themselves or a close family member within the preceding two years.

Support and Training

- All befrienders must read the guidance notes and view the videos provided.
- All befrienders must take part in an individual or group induction to reflect on the learning gained from the guidance and videos.
- All befrienders will have an opportunity to feedback on their experience of volunteering in this role, be offered group supervision and access to any relevant training sessions.
- Out of pocket expenses for phone calls made will be paid subject to proof of costs incurred.
- Expenses are paid for travel up to a limit of 30 miles per day, currently at 45p per mile.

Further information: Email: volunteer@themulberrycentre.co.uk

Responsible to: Volunteer Lead